

Classic Jazz Recordings

By Adrian Ingram

TED GREENE - SOLO GUITAR - PMP A5010

It is a sad fact that the majority of CLASSIC RECORDINGS discussed in JGG are virtually impossible to obtain, and this month's Classic recording is no exception. Like Rene Thomas, Ernest Ranglin, Dick Garcia, Ike Isaacs and Billy Bean, Ted Greene's reputation preceded his, as yet, one and only recording. Ted Greene's SOLO GUITAR was first released, as a limited edition, in 1977 and repressed, with a different cover, in 1979. Both variations have since become highly treasured collectors' items. And what a treasure it is, particularly the awesome version of "Danny Boy" (Londonderry Air), a real *jawdropper* and the absolute standout of this fine album. Other tracks include "They Can't Take That Away From Me," "Ol' Man River," "Just Friends," "Watch What Happens," "Send In the Clowns" a Gershwin medley and the seldom recorded "A Certain Smile." All of which, while sound to have been double tracked, were in fact recorded with no overdubbing whatsoever. Ted used his faithful old Fender Telecaster through a Twin

Reverb for the entire session. His sound was enhanced by the addition of a small Leslie rotating speaker. The crystal clean sound was taken directly from the board, as well as the ambience of the twin, resulting in a magnificently pure tone. Greene, as is his usual custom, also detuned his guitar by a whole step (a tone) which again added to the depth and fullness of the sound.

Everything on this recording represents this legendary, but reclusive figure: brilliant shimmering harmonics, mind-boggling chord voicings and the ultimate in logical voice-leading. While the single-line work is of a consistently high level, the chord playing is inspirational, even the majority of great professional players feel like beginners after hearing "Danny Boy," an interpretation which, in itself, will earn Greene a permanent place in the history of jazz guitar. I know that String Jazz recordings are negotiating to re-issue SOLO GUITAR on CD, a move which would ultimately enrich us all. Until such time, keep your eyes open in Lee Wall's lists (Guitar Records) or rare record auctions. You won't be disappointed.

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